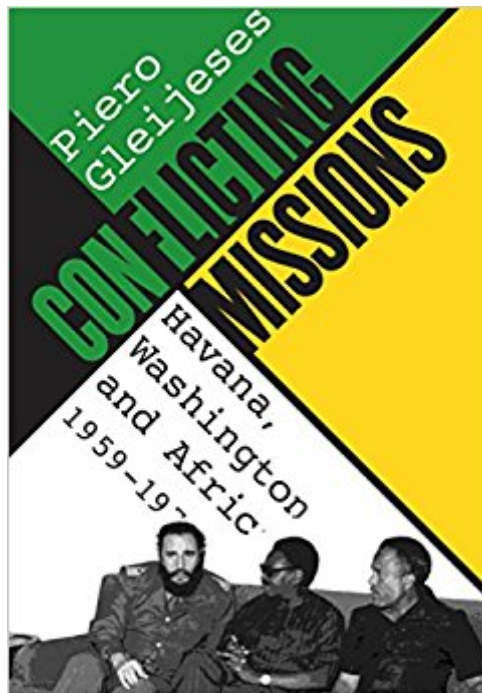




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Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, And Africa, 1959-1976 (Envisioning Cuba)



Synopsis

This is a compelling and dramatic account of Cuban policy in Africa from 1959 to 1976 and of its escalating clash with U.S. policy toward the continent. Piero Gleijeses's fast-paced narrative takes the reader from Cuba's first steps to assist Algerian rebels fighting France in 1961, to the secret war between Havana and Washington in Zaire in 1964-65--where 100 Cubans led by Che Guevara clashed with 1,000 mercenaries controlled by the CIA--and, finally, to the dramatic dispatch of 30,000 Cubans to Angola in 1975-76, which stopped the South African advance on Luanda and doomed Henry Kissinger's major covert operation there. Based on unprecedented archival research and firsthand interviews in virtually all of the countries involved--Gleijeses was even able to gain extensive access to closed Cuban archives--this comprehensive and balanced work sheds new light on U.S. foreign policy and CIA covert operations. It revolutionizes our view of Cuba's international role, challenges conventional U.S. beliefs about the influence of the Soviet Union in directing Cuba's actions in Africa, and provides, for the first time ever, a look from the inside at Cuba's foreign policy during the Cold War."Fascinating . . . and often downright entertaining. . . . Gleijeses recounts the Cuban story with considerable flair, taking good advantage of rich material.--Washington Post Book World"Gleijeses's research . . . bluntly contradicts the Congressional testimony of the era and the memoirs of Henry A. Kissinger. . . . After reviewing Dr. Gleijeses's work, several former senior United States diplomats who were involved in making policy toward Angola broadly endorsed its conclusions.--New York Times"With the publication of *Conflicting Missions*, Piero Gleijeses establishes his reputation as the most impressive historian of the Cold War in the Third World. Drawing on previously unavailable Cuban and African as well as American sources, he tells a story that's full of fresh and surprising information. And best of all, he does this with a remarkable sensitivity to the perspectives of the protagonists. This book will become an instant classic.--John Lewis Gaddis, author of *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*Based on unprecedented research in Cuban, American, and European archives, this is the compelling story of Cuban policy in Africa from 1959 to 1976 and of its escalating clash with U.S. policy toward the continent. Piero Gleijeses sheds new light on U.S. foreign policy and CIA covert operations, revolutionizes our view of Cuba's international role, and provides the first look from the inside at Cuba's foreign policy during the Cold War.-->

Book Information

File Size: 6318 KB

Print Length: 572 pages

Publisher: The University of North Carolina Press (March 1, 2011)

Publication Date: March 1, 2011

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00AECXD58

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #309,637 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #84

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Customer Reviews

I found this a very interesting book, following the interventions of Cuba and Washington in Africa, especially Angola, in the 1970s. Cuba's successful intervention in the form of troops and help to the MPLA was motivated by idealism and a mission to carry out revolution. Washington's motives included fighting Communism and restoring credibility after Vietnam and consisted of support to the troops of apartheid South Africa.

Great book! It confirms what I always suspected in that Angola-Namibia-South Africa-Cuba-Washington dynamic!! I have recommended it to friends and I used it in one of my classes

A great book in many ways, and essential reading for anyone interested in the Cold War in Africa. I just wish the Kindl edition had hyper-linked endnotes.

Outstanding. Gleijeses sets the record straight on many issues and offers critical, insightful analysis of the actions taken by the Cuban, US, and Soviet governments with regards to Africa. The major feature of this books is Gleijeses' unprecedented access to Cuban archival records, allowing him to

present the internal workings of the Castro administration and the general Cuban view of world events with regards to Africa in the period 1959-1976. Like a true scholar, Gleijeses respectfully and carefully presents the arguments of other authors, historians, journalists, and government officials in an unbiased way; lays out the evidence offered in support of their arguments; lays out the new evidence; and draws a conclusion. Sometimes new research decisively concludes the debate, other times there are still areas of uncertainty and Gleijeses clearly states this, and still other times he refrains from drawing a conclusion (for too little evidence or too much uncertainty), even explicitly stating "I cannot solve the puzzle" (p. 271). Often, an author of a work on Castro's Cuba is branded as biased because a reader, whether pro- or anti-Castro, does not feel the author is criticizing or praising Castro enough. In this respect, Gleijeses clearly goes to great lengths to be unbiased: he is very careful to note his suspicions of bias in a certain interviewee's, author's, journalist's, etc. account of a historical event. That is, Gleijeses may refer to a statement made by an interviewee, but will then immediately after (and not in the footnote, but in the main text), explicitly state that he suspects this account may be biased because the person defected from Cuba/still lives in Cuba/etc. Gleijeses also tackles the controversial questions about the motivation and extent of US and Soviet intervention, and if Cuba was acting merely as a Soviet puppet in Africa. Again, this is done in an extremely careful and fair manner, adhering strictly to government documents and archival records, comparing other historical analyses, and drawing conclusions based solely on the facts. "Conflicting Missions" is a rigorous, comprehensive history of an aspect of certain African independence movements is often overlooked: the Cuban contribution. This book shines because of its use of newly available documents and its critical, impartial analysis of what actually happened, absent of the ideology, propaganda, and bias that so often surrounds these issues.

This book is enlightening. The author has gone through great length (brave endeavour) to collect evidence (...I believe) to inform the outcome. A moderate degree of impartiality (neutrality) reveals a responsible, constructive, inclusive... project, and the architect (the writer) as a relevant story teller. With that said; he clearly stated early on that this work was not written from a western prism. Thus, brought to surface the voices (angle) of those most affected. Because I was born in (Sagrada-Familia) Luanda, Angola -1977 and told many "cheerless accounts" of how their generation was brought up and had endured as young adults by "above all" my own mother who was born in late 1939 --- the subject matter of this book presented me w/ a vivid opportunity to grasp at foreign engagement in a critical phase of Africa's "political de-colonization" by the Europeans; as well as with a break to contrast it w/ the narrative given by my elders (forebears). What was, at least,

vague to me... the book's opaque inquiry on what indeed drove "the African liberation movements" foremost...!! Y?!? Foreign engagement was mostly driven by opportunism, prestige, leverage... and the book goes to a great extent (forthright; biased) to unfold "strategic policy" craft / "realpolitik" overseas, yet quite fuzzy when depicted what drove African's movement leaders. I recommend this book to my peers as a means or guide for progress.

I first read this book when I was 17 or 16. It was awesome. I studied it twice. As a historical document, it shows the truth of what went down there. The bibliography provides a great deal of sources, which I used and tells you which ones are bias or not. This indeed is the way LA history must be written: unbiased record.

the role of Cuba in Africa, and its participation in Africa's anti-colonial revolutions is described with details and documented facts in this book. This is the "bible" on this subject.

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